

## **2200            Collecting Public Input**

### **2201            Overview**

The Area Agency on Aging shall ensure that public input is elicited in the development of the Area Plan on Aging. The Advisory Council has an advisory function that furthers the Area Agency on Aging's mission of developing and coordinating community-based systems of services for all older persons in its Planning and Service Area. Area Agencies on Aging shall conduct public input sessions whereby information and suggestions from the public is elicited whenever it proposes to submit or amend an Area Plan on Aging or seek a waiver.

This chapter provides an outline of the Division of Aging and Adult Services operational principles and procedures for the functions of the Advisory Council, established by an Area Agency on Aging. This chapter also provides an outline of the Division of Aging and Adult Services operational principles and procedures for minimal informational requirements that need to be made available for consideration to the public, when conducting Area Plan public input sessions. **This policy chapter is subject to change as additional information and/or regulations are received from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Aging.**

*Reference: Older Americans Act of 1965, as Amended in 2000, P.L. 106-501, §306 and §307; and Title 45 C.F.R. §1321.57 and §1321.61.*

### **2202            Operational Principles for Advisory Councils**

2202.1 The Advisory Council represents the interest of older individuals and carries out advisory functions which further the Area Agency's mission of developing and coordinating community-based systems of services for all older persons in the planning and service area.

2202.2 The Advisory Council advises and makes recommendations to the Area Agency on Aging on the development and administration of an approved Area Plan on Aging.

2202.3 The Advisory Council actively participates in conducting public input sessions.

2202.4 The Advisory Council reviews and comments on all community policies, programs and actions which affect older individuals with the intent of ensuring maximum coordination and responsiveness to older individuals.

### **2203            Operational Procedures for Advisory Councils**

2203.1 The Advisory Council shall be responsible for reviewing the Area Plan, and any amendments to the plan prior to its transmittal to the Division of Aging and Adult Services for approval.

2203.2 The Advisory Council shall be provided adequate training relative to its advisory role maintained in relation to the roles of the Division of Aging

and Adult Services and the Area Agency on Aging. At a minimum, the following shall be provided during an Advisory Council training:

- A) Overview of the Older American's Act, as amended, with emphasis on Titles and the purpose of each Title.
- B) Organizational structures of the Administration on Aging, the Division of Aging and Adult Services, Area Agencies on Aging and service providers.
- C) Responsibilities of Division of Aging and Adult Services with emphasis on the State Plan process, Funding Formula, funding flow, allocation of funds, and the designation of and relationship with Area Agencies on Aging.
- D) Responsibilities of Area Agencies on Aging, with special emphasis on Area Plan development and process, and the allocation of funds.
- E) Responsibilities of Advisory Councils, with special emphasis on the membership role to advise the Area Agency on Aging on all matters relating to the development of the Area Plan, the administration of the plan, and operations conducted under the plan.
- F) Other areas as identified by the Area Agency on Aging.

2203.3 The composition of the Advisory Council shall be such that representation from the total community is reflected, and to ensure the leadership role which the Area Agency on Aging holds is enhanced and strengthened. The Advisory Council shall consist of the following:

- A) More than 50% older persons, including minority individuals and older individuals residing in rural areas who are participants or who are eligible to participate in programs funded under the Older Americans Act.
- B) Representatives of older individuals.
- C) Representatives of health care provider organizations, including providers of veteran's health care, if appropriate.
- D) Representatives of supportive service provider organizations.
- E) Persons with leadership experience in the private and voluntary sectors.
- F) Local elected officials.
- G) The general public.

2203.4 In selecting the membership of the Advisory Council, Area Agencies on Aging shall ensure that a conflict of interest does not exist among its members. Provider agencies selected for membership on the Advisory Council cannot receive funds from Area Agencies on Aging.

**2204                    Operational Principles for Public Input**

- 2204.1 Area Agencies on Aging, as responsible advocates, shall provide an opportunity for full participation by older persons and other members of the public in decisions made which affect older persons and the programs that Area Agencies on Aging provide.
- 2204.2 Public input associated with the Area Plan on Aging provide an opportunity to collect input from older persons as well as to provide a mechanism for discussing legislative, administrative and programmatic issues affecting older persons.
- 2204.3 The information disseminated during the public input sessions should be readable and understandable, with sufficient information to support an understanding of the Area Agency on Aging's intentions and the implications for the older person living within the Planning and Service Area.

**2205                    Operational Procedures for Public Input Sessions**

- 2205.1 The Area Agency on Aging shall hold public input sessions when it plans to submit or amend an Area Plan on Aging or seek a waiver as described in sections 2104 and 2700 respectively.
- 2205.2 The Area Agency on Aging shall hold at least one public input session prior to submitting a new Area Plan on Aging as identified in Division of Aging and Adult Services Policy Chapter 2100.
- 2205.3 The Area Agency on Aging shall hold at least one public input session each fiscal year on an approved Area Plan on Aging to:
- A) Establish that the Area Agency on Aging has accomplished the goals and objectives stipulated for the preceding fiscal year.
  - B) Discuss any amendments in the goals and objectives for the coming fiscal year.
  - C) Inform the public of funds expended during the preceding fiscal year for identified services.
- 2205.4 The Area Agency on Aging shall use the media or other public venues to inform potentially interested parties of the scheduled public input session(s) and identify time and purpose of the public input session(s). Notices shall be posted in visible places.
- 2205.5 The Area Agency on Aging shall publicize the public input session at least 14 calendar days in advance of the scheduled public input session and must document the publications in their Area Plan on Aging.
- 2205.6 Public input sessions shall be held at times and locations that permit older persons, public officials, and other interested parties the opportunity to participate.

- 2205.7 Sufficient background or other information specific to the purpose of the public input session (for example: copies of the proposed document, needs assessment, current budget) should be made available to interested parties at least five working days in advance of the scheduled public input session so that interested parties are provided an opportunity to review, understand, prepare, and formally express their comments.
- 2205.8 The Area Agency on Aging must keep a written record of the proceedings of the public input session and include the written record in their Area Plan on Aging.